



## Transforming *Fiqh* Education for the Twenty-First Century: The Role of Problem-Based and Project-Based Learning

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### Abstract

*This study examines how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) contribute to the transformation of Fiqh Education in Islamic Higher Education. Although twenty-first-century competencies have become central to contemporary educational transformation, their integration into Islamic legal education remains relatively underexplored, particularly in relation to contextual and competency-oriented pedagogical practices. This study aims to analyze how PBL and PjBL foster the development of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity (4Cs) while reshaping the learning dynamics of Fiqh education. The study employed a mixed-methods approach using a Sequential Explanatory Design involving 38 students in the Primary Madrasah Teacher Education Program at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Data were collected through competency assessment rubrics, classroom observations, and in-depth interviews and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative techniques. The findings indicate that PBL and PjBL positively contributed to the development of students' twenty-first-century competencies, particularly collaboration, communication, and creativity, while critical thinking developed more gradually. The study also reveals that these active pedagogical approaches transformed Fiqh learning from a predominantly normative and lecturer-centered model into a more dialogic, contextual, collaborative, and student-centered educational process. These findings contribute to the growing discourse on competency-oriented pedagogy and demonstrate that the transformation of Fiqh Education is both feasible and necessary for responding to contemporary educational demands without diminishing its intellectual and spiritual foundations.*

## A. Introduction

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has transformed not only technological systems but also the epistemological foundations of education. In an era shaped by artificial intelligence, automation, and accelerated information flows, universities are increasingly expected to produce graduates equipped with critical reasoning, collaborative problem-solving, adaptive communication, and creative innovation rather than merely disciplinary knowledge (Syukur et al., 2025; Nirmala et al., 2025). Yet a major paradox persists, while twenty-first-century competencies have become central to global educational agendas, many higher education institutions continue to rely on pedagogical traditions centered on memorization and passive knowledge transmission. As emphasized by the OECD Learning Framework 2030, education must equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary to navigate uncertainty and contribute to sustainable futures (OECD, 2016).

This challenge is particularly significant within Islamic Higher Education, where institutions are expected to preserve Islamic intellectual traditions while simultaneously preparing students to respond critically and creatively to contemporary social realities. In this context, universities are increasingly viewed as strategic actors in developing adaptive human resources equipped with skills in collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Quieng et al., (2020) argue that the essence of twenty-first-century competencies lies in preparing future generations to collaboratively address increasingly complex global problems. Similarly, Bourn (2021) emphasizes that higher-order competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration are indispensable for meaningful participation in contemporary society. These competencies, commonly conceptualized as the 4C framework, have therefore become dominant paradigms within current educational transformation agendas.

Ironically, despite the growing urgency of these competencies, learning practices in many religious education contexts remain dominated by lecturer-centered approaches emphasizing textual memorization and the normative transmission of knowledge (Mustofa et al., 2024; Jannana et al., 2025). This condition is particularly visible in *Fiqh* education, where instruction often focuses on mastering legal rulings and classical doctrinal concepts rather than encouraging contextual reasoning, interpretive analysis, collaborative inquiry, and problem-solving (Mustofa et al., 2024; Patmawati et al., 2025). Such pedagogical patterns risk reducing *Fiqh* into a merely procedural discipline detached from contemporary socio-religious realities. In fact, *Fiqh* possesses strong epistemological potential for developing twenty-first-century competencies because it fundamentally involves legal



reasoning, ethical judgment, interpretive negotiation, and engagement with multiple scholarly perspectives (Mustofa et al., 2024; Mundzir et al., 2026). Within rapidly changing contexts such as digital transactions, Islamic financial innovation, and evolving socio-religious dynamics, the inability to integrate active, competency-oriented learning approaches into *Fiqh* education may weaken the relevance of Islamic higher education (Imron & Muallifah, 2025; Arodha et al., 2025; Mundzir et al., 2026).

Two pedagogical approaches increasingly recognized for addressing these challenges are Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL). Problem-Based Learning engages students in solving authentic and complex problems requiring critical analysis, collaborative inquiry, and reflective reasoning (Yew & Goh, 2021). Meanwhile, Project-Based Learning organizes learning around sustained projects integrating planning, implementation, and presentation processes, thereby supporting creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking simultaneously (Kokotsaki et al., 2021). Empirical studies indicate that both models contribute positively to the development of 4C competencies when implemented with appropriate instructional support (Savery, 2021; Chen & Yang, 2023). Through these approaches, students are encouraged not only to understand theoretical concepts but also to construct knowledge actively through contextual problem-solving and project development.

Nevertheless, existing studies on twenty-first-century competencies have predominantly focused on general education, vocational education, and science-related disciplines. Existing scholarship consistently emphasizes the importance of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity in preparing learners for rapidly changing global environments. Indarta et al. (2021) highlighted the need for adaptive educational systems capable of responding to technological developments and globalization challenges, while Fisser and Thijs (2015) found that the integration of twenty-first-century competencies remains uneven across educational settings, with collaboration receiving greater attention than creativity and problem-solving. Although these studies confirm the growing significance of twenty-first-century competencies, they primarily focus on curriculum frameworks and general educational contexts.

A growing body of research further demonstrates that active learning approaches such as Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) can effectively foster higher-order competencies, including critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity (Yew & Goh, 2021; Savery, 2021; Kokotsaki et al., 2021; Chen & Yang, 2023). Within Islamic educational contexts, contextual and participatory learning approaches have

also been shown to strengthen students' engagement with Islamic knowledge and contemporary social realities (Suryani & Rahman, 2019; Maulana et al., 2023). Likewise, recent studies emphasize the importance of pedagogical innovation in Islamic Higher Education to enhance educational quality and institutional competitiveness in an increasingly globalized educational landscape (Thoyib et al., 2025; Arifin et al., 2025). However, limited attention has been given to how PBL and PjBL contribute simultaneously to the development of twenty-first-century competencies and the transformation of *Fiqh* Education within Islamic Higher Education.

These previous studies reveal several important limitations within existing literature. Research on twenty-first-century competencies has rarely examined Islamic Higher Education as a distinct pedagogical and epistemological context. Moreover, existing studies primarily focus on curriculum discourse or the effectiveness of active learning models in general educational settings, providing limited understanding of how such competencies are developed through classroom practices within Islamic disciplines. As a result, the potential of *Fiqh* Education as a learning space for fostering collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity remains insufficiently explored, particularly in relation to the implementation of Problem-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning.

This study positions *Fiqh* Education not merely as a domain for transmitting Islamic legal knowledge but as a strategic learning space for developing twenty-first-century competencies. Its novelty lies in demonstrating that the epistemological foundations of *Fiqh*—such as legal reasoning, contextual interpretation, ethical judgment, and scholarly deliberation—can be transformed into pedagogical resources for fostering collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. By integrating Problem-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning into *Fiqh* instruction, this study offers a competency-oriented model of *Fiqh* Education that bridges classical Islamic scholarship with the demands of contemporary higher education.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to investigate how Problem-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning contribute to the transformation of *Fiqh* Education in Islamic Higher Education through the development of twenty-first-century competencies, particularly collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how these pedagogical models contribute to the development of students' 4C competencies while simultaneously reshaping the learning dynamics of *Fiqh* education in Islamic Higher Education.



## **B. Method**

This study employed a mixed-methods approach using a Sequential Explanatory Design, in which quantitative data collection and analysis were conducted first, followed by qualitative exploration to provide a deeper interpretation of the findings. The study aimed to examine how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) contribute to the transformation of *Fiqh* Education within Islamic Higher Education through the development of twenty-first-century competencies (4Cs). The quantitative phase focused on measuring students' competencies in collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity, while the qualitative phase explored classroom interactions and participants' learning experiences during the implementation of the instructional models.

The study was conducted in the Primary *Madrasah* Teacher Education (PGMI) Study Program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, during the fifth semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants comprised 38 students enrolled in the *Fiqh* Education course, including 5 males and 33 females. The learning process was carried out over six meetings, comprising four Problem-Based Learning meetings and two Project-Based Learning meetings. The implementation focused on *Fiqh muamalah* topics, including traditional and online buying and selling, lending and borrowing, and *Hajj* and *Umrah* practices.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and competency assessment instruments. Quantitative data were obtained using a Likert-scale assessment rubric comprising 18 indicators covering collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Content validity was evaluated by two experts using Aiken's V index, producing validity scores ranging from 0.75 to 1.00. Construct validity was analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment correlation, with an average r-value of 0.753 exceeding the r-table value of 0.361. Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha produced an average coefficient of 0.8475, indicating good internal consistency.

Qualitative data were obtained through systematic classroom observations and in-depth interviews with lecturers and students involved in the learning process. Observations focused on how students developed collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity during PBL and PjBL activities. Interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to implementing the instructional models. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy.

Quantitative data analysis involved data tabulation, calculation of mean scores and percentages, determination of competency categories, and comparative analysis across learning sessions. Meanwhile, qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns related to the transformation of *Fiqh* learning and the development of twenty-first-century competencies through PBL and PjBL activities. The findings from both data sets were then integrated to provide complementary explanations of the relationship between competency outcomes and classroom learning experiences.

This study was conducted in accordance with academic research ethics principles, including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data management. All participants were informed of the study's objectives and procedures prior to data collection, and all data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

This section presents the study's findings on how Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) contribute to the transformation of *Fiqh* Education in Islamic Higher Education. The findings are systematically organized by presenting empirical evidence related to collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity competencies. These findings are subsequently discussed through an analytical interpretation that examines how the implementation of PBL and PjBL reshapes *Fiqh* learning into a more dialogic, contextual, collaborative, and student-centered educational process. The discussion further explores the pedagogical significance, theoretical implications, and broader relevance of this transformation within the context of twenty-first-century learning and Islamic Higher Education.

#### **1. Results**

This section presents empirical findings on the role of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) in transforming *Fiqh* Education within Islamic Higher Education. The findings are organized around the four twenty-first-century competency components examined in this study—collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Quantitative findings are presented first to illustrate students' competency development, followed by qualitative evidence from classroom observations and interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical transformation occurring throughout the learning process.



The implementation of PBL and PjBL was conducted over six classroom meetings, involving 38 students divided into six groups of six to seven members. As part of the effort to foster a more contextual, collaborative, and student-centered approach to *Fiqh* Education, each group was assigned different tasks related to *Fiqh muamalah* topics, including traditional and online buying and selling, lending and borrowing, and *Hajj* and *Umrah* practices. During the PBL sessions, students were required to identify, discuss, and collaboratively solve contextual *Fiqh*-related problems, while the PjBL sessions focused on developing simulation video projects related to *Hajj* and *Umrah* practices. Throughout the learning activities, students were observed using a 4C competency assessment rubric consisting of 18 indicators. The resulting findings provide empirical evidence of how these pedagogical approaches contributed to the development of twenty-first-century competencies and supported the transformation of *Fiqh* learning within Islamic Higher Education.

*Table 1. Learning activities with PBL1 and PBL2 syntax*

<b>PBL Syntax</b>	<b>Student Activities</b>
1. Orienting educators to the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the first meeting, the students were asked to study material related to <i>Fiqh muamalah</i>.</li> <li>- The students were divided into six groups, each consisting of 6-7 members. Each group selected a group name.</li> <li>- The lecturer and students discussed six different issues related to <i>Fiqh muamalah</i>.</li> </ul>
2. Organizing educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each group discussed the problem that had been assigned to them</li> </ul>
3. Guiding individual and group investigations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lecturer guided the problem-solving process in each group and individually, while also motivating students by observing the discussions to ensure that the implementation of the 4Cs was carried out effectively. The problem-solving results were presented creatively in the form of mind maps, PowerPoint presentations, or Canva applications</li> </ul>
4. Developing and presenting work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the second meeting, each group creatively presented the results of its discussion.</li> <li>- The lecturer observed and assessed the presentations based on the 4C observation instrument.</li> </ul>
5. Analyzing and evaluating the problem-solving process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the presentations, each group evaluated the discussion results of the other groups and provided feedback on problem-solving related to the course material.</li> <li>- The lecturer and students reflected on the learning process</li> </ul>

Table 1 illustrates how the implementation of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) structured the transformation of *Fiqh* learning through a sequence of problem orientation, group organization, investigation, presentation, and evaluation activities. Through these stages, students actively engaged in collaborative discussions, contextual problem-solving, and interactive presentations using various media, including mind maps, PowerPoint slides, and Canva. The learning process encouraged students not only to acquire *Fiqh* knowledge but also to develop communication, collaboration, and critical reasoning skills by evaluating the arguments and solutions presented by other groups. These activities reflect a shift from a predominantly lecturer-centered approach toward a more participatory and student-centered learning environment.

*Table 2. Learning activities with PjBL syntax*

<b>PjBL Syntax</b>	<b>Student Activities</b>
1. Defining the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The students were asked to study the topics of Hajj and Umrah.</li> <li>- During the first meeting, the students were divided into six groups, each consisting of 6-7 members. Each group was given a group name.</li> <li>- The lecturer assigned three groups to create a creative project in the form of a simulation video about Umrah, while the other three groups were assigned to create a simulation video about Hajj.</li> </ul>
2. Design the steps to complete the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each group discussed and determined a plan for producing a simulation video of the Hajj and Umrah rituals.</li> <li>- The lecturer observed the 4C skills throughout the learning process</li> </ul>
3. Develop a project implementation schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each group created a script, assigned roles for the simulation, and determined when the simulation would take place.</li> </ul>
4. Completing the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The task of creating the Hajj and Umrah simulation videos was carried out outside class hours.</li> <li>- The lecturer gave the students one week to complete the assignment and prepare a presentation of the project results.</li> </ul>
5. Report preparation and presentation/publication of project results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the second meeting, each group presented the results of its project in the form of a simulation of the Hajj and Umrah rituals.</li> <li>- The lecturer evaluated the project outcomes completed by each group.</li> </ul>
6. Evaluation of the project process and results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A student representative from each group analyzed, evaluated, and provided feedback to the other groups.</li> <li>- The lecturer and students reflected on the learning process together.</li> </ul>

As shown in Table 2, the implementation of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) facilitated the transformation of *Fiqh* learning through project planning, collaborative project development, scheduling, project completion, presentation, and evaluation activities. Students worked collaboratively to design and produce simulation videos of *Hajj* and *Umrah* rituals, allowing them to connect theoretical understanding with authentic learning experiences. The project-based activities encouraged active participation, communication, teamwork, and creative production throughout the learning process. More importantly, these activities shifted *Fiqh* learning beyond the transmission of doctrinal knowledge toward a more experiential, contextual, and student-centered educational approach.

The findings related to collaboration competencies indicate that students generally demonstrated competent to very competent levels during the implementation of PBL and PjBL. Collaboration skills were assessed based on active participation, teamwork, and shared responsibility within group activities.

*Table 3. Collaboration Competency Assessment Results*

Group	COLLABORATION			Score	Grade
	A	B	C		
<b>PBL 1</b>					
Group 1	3	3	3	9	75
Group 2	4	3	4	11	91.6
Group 3	3	3	3	9	75
Group 4	3	3	3	9	75
Group 5	4	4	3	11	91.6
Group 6	3	4	3	10	83.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>79</b>		<b>81.87</b>
<b>PBL 2</b>					
Group 1	3	3	3	9	75
Group 2	4	3	4	11	91.6
Group 3	3	3	4	10	83.3
Group 4	3	3	3	9	75
Group 5	4	4	3	11	91.6
Group 6	4	4	3	11	91.6
<b>Average</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>83.3</b>		<b>83.3</b>
<b>PJBL</b>					
Group 1	3	4	3	10	83.3
Group 2	4	3	4	11	91.6
Group 3	3	3	4	10	83.3
Group 4	3	3	4	10	83.3
Group 5	4	4	3	11	91.6

Group	COLLABORATION			Score	Grade
	A	B	C		
Group 6	4	4	3	11	91,6
Average	87,5	87,5	87,5		87,5
Average aspect	84,7	84,7	83,3		

Table 3 demonstrates that the average collaboration competency scores increased across the implementation stages. In PBL 1, the average collaboration score was 81.87, while in PBL 2, it increased to 83.3. The highest average score was obtained during the PjBL implementation, reaching 87.5. These findings indicate that collaborative learning activities became more effective as students became increasingly familiar with group-based problem-solving and project-oriented tasks. Most groups achieved competent and very competent categories, particularly in aspects related to cooperation and collective responsibility. These findings suggest that collaborative learning practices became increasingly embedded within the *Fiqh* learning process as students engaged more actively in group-based inquiry and project-oriented activities.

Classroom observations also revealed that students became more actively engaged in group discussions and task distribution during the learning process. During one observation session, students were observed independently dividing responsibilities while discussing solutions to *Fiqh*-related cases. One lecturer involved in the learning process explained: “Students gradually became more active in discussions and more confident in expressing opinions during collaborative activities. They were also more willing to help each other when completing assignments.” (Interview with Lecturer AS, 2025).

The interview findings indicate that collaborative learning activities through PBL and PjBL encouraged students to participate more actively and strengthened collective problem-solving practices during classroom interactions. Communication competency was assessed through students’ ability to express opinions, present ideas, participate in discussions, and respond systematically during classroom interactions.

Table 4. Communication competency assessment results

Group	COMMUNICATION						Score	Grade
	D	E	F	G	H	I		
<b>PBL 1</b>								
Group 1	3	4	3	4	3	2	19	79
Group 2	4	4	3	3	3	3	20	83.3
Group 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	75
Group 4	4	3	4	3	3	3	20	83.3
Group 5	3	3	4	4	3	2	19	79
Group 6	3	3	4	4	3	2	19	79



Group	COMMUNICATION						Score	Grade
	D	E	F	G	H	I		
<b>PBL 1</b>								
<b>Average</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>87,5</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>		<b>77.6</b>
<b>PBL 2</b>								
Group 1	3	4	3	4	3	2	20	79
Group 2	4	4	3	3	3	3	20	75
Group 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	75
Group 4	3	3	4	3	3	3	19	79
Group 5	3	3	4	4	3	2	19	79
Group 6	3	3	4	3	3	2	19	79
<b>Average</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>78.6</b>
<b>PJBL</b>								
Group 1	3	4	3	4	3	2	19	79
Group 2	4	4	3	3	3	3	20	83.3
Group 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	75
Group 4	4	3	4	3	3	3	20	83.3
Group 5	3	3	4	4	3	2	19	79
Group 6	3	3	4	4	3	2	19	79
<b>Everage</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>87,5</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>		<b>79.77</b>
<b>Everage aspect</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>84.7</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>		

Based on Table 4, communication competency showed relatively stable results across all learning stages. The average score in PBL 1 reached 77.6, increasing slightly to 78.6 in PBL 2, while the PjBL implementation produced an average score of 79.77. Several communication indicators achieved relatively high scores, particularly those related to oral presentation and classroom discussion. However, some aspects remained lower, especially students' ability to communicate arguments in a more structured and elaborative manner.

Observation findings showed that students became more confident during presentations and discussions after repeated exposure to collaborative learning activities. During group presentations, students demonstrated greater willingness to answer questions and defend their arguments before classmates. One student stated:

*“At the beginning, many students were hesitant to speak during discussions, but after several meetings, we became more confident because the learning activities required us to communicate actively within the group and during presentations.”* (Interview with Student FR, 2025).

These findings demonstrate that PBL and PjBL fostered more active communication practices and supported a more participatory learning environment within *Fiqh* Education. The findings regarding critical thinking competency indicate different patterns compared to collaboration and communication competencies. Critical

thinking was assessed through students’ ability to analyze problems, provide logical arguments, and determine contextual solutions.

*Table 5. Critical thinking competency assessment results*

Group	CRITICAL THINKING			Score	Grade
	J	K	L		
<b>PBL 1</b>					
Group 1	2	2	3	7	58.3
Group 2	2	2	3	7	58.3
Group 3	2	2	3	7	58.3
Group 4	2	3	3	8	66,7
Group 5	2	3	3	8	66,7
Group 6	2	2	3	7	58.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>61</b>
<b>PBL 2</b>					
Group 1	3	3	3	9	75
Group 2	3	3	3	9	75
Group 3	3	3	3	9	75
Group 4	4	3	3	10	83.3
Group 5	3	3	3	9	75
Group 6	3	3	3	9	75
<b>Average</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>76.4</b>
<b>PJBL</b>					
Group 1	3	3	3	9	75
Group 2	3	3	3	9	75
Group 3	3	3	3	9	75
Group 4	4	3	3	10	83.3
Group 5	3	3	3	9	75
Group 6	3	3	3	9	75
<b>Average</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>76.4</b>
<b>Average aspect</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>71.3</b>

Table 5 shows that critical thinking competency initially appeared relatively low during the first implementation stage. In PBL 1, the average score reached only 61, indicating a quite competent category. However, significant improvement occurred during PBL 2 and PjBL implementation, with average scores increasing to 76.4. Despite this improvement, critical thinking remained the lowest competency compared to collaboration, communication, and creativity.

Classroom observations revealed that many students initially had difficulty analyzing *Fiqh* problems in context and formulating evidence-based arguments. During discussions, several groups tended to rely directly on textbook explanations without further analytical exploration. However, after repeated exposure to problem-solving activities, students gradually demonstrated better analytical responses and more contextual

reasoning. One lecturer explained: “Students initially tended to provide normative answers, but after several discussions they began to analyze problems more critically and connect Fiqh concepts with contemporary issues.” (Interview with Lecturer MN, 2025)

This finding indicates that although critical thinking competency developed gradually through PBL and PjBL activities, students still required continuous guidance and practice in analytical reasoning and contextual problem-solving as part of the broader transformation of *Fiqh* learning.

Creativity competency was assessed through students’ ability to generate ideas, produce innovative learning products, and present learning outcomes creatively.

Table 6. Results of creativity competency assessment

Group	CREATIVITY						Score	Grade
	M	N	O	P	Q	R		
<b>PBL 1</b>								
Group 1	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 2	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	75
Group 4	3	3	3	3	3	3	18	75
Group 5	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 6	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
<b>Average</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>91.6</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>77.7</b>
<b>PBL 2</b>								
Group 1	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 2	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 3	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 4	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 5	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 6	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
<b>Average</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>79</b>
<b>PjBL</b>								
Group	CREATIVITY						Scor	Grade
	D	E	F	G	H	I		
Group 1	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 2	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 3	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 4	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 5	3	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
Group 6	4	4	3	3	3	3	19	79
<b>Everage</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Everage aspect</b>	<b>76.3</b>	<b>97.2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>75</b>		<b>79</b>

As shown in Table 6, creativity competency demonstrated relatively consistent results throughout the implementation process. The average creativity score reached 77.7 in PBL 1, increased slightly to 79 in PBL 2, and remained stable during PjBL

implementation. Students demonstrated creativity, particularly in developing presentation media, mind maps, Canva designs, and Hajj and Umrah simulation videos.

Observation findings indicated that students became increasingly motivated to create visually appealing, contextually relevant project outputs. During the PjBL activities, several groups independently designed simulation scenarios and creatively edited presentation videos. One student explained: *“The project assignments encouraged us to think creatively because we had to design learning videos and determine how the simulations could be understood clearly by others”*. (Interview with Student NA, 2025).

These findings indicate that project-oriented learning activities provided opportunities for students to explore creative ideas and develop more innovative learning outcomes, reinforcing the shift toward a more active and student-centered model of *Fiqh* Education. Overall, the findings demonstrate that PBL and PjBL contributed not only to the development of students’ twenty-first-century competencies in *Fiqh* Education but also to a broader pedagogical transformation of the learning process. Collaboration emerged as the strongest competency, followed by creativity and communication, while critical thinking showed gradual but comparatively lower improvement across the learning sessions. Collectively, these findings indicate a shift toward a more dialogic, contextual, collaborative, and student-centered approach to *Fiqh* learning within Islamic Higher Education.

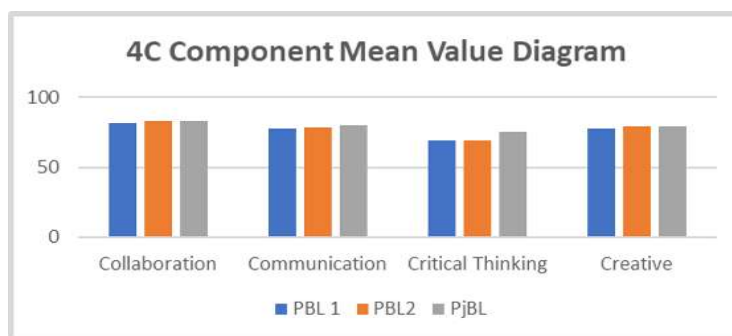


Figure 1. 4C Component mean value diagram

Figure 1 illustrates the overall comparison of students’ average scores across the four competency components. The figure shows that collaboration achieved the highest average scores, while critical thinking remained the lowest among the four competencies observed during the implementation of PBL and PjBL in *Fiqh* learning.



## **2. Discussion**

The findings of this study demonstrate that Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) contribute to the transformation of *Fiqh* Education in Islamic Higher Education through the development of twenty-first-century competencies. More importantly, these findings reveal that active pedagogical approaches are capable of transforming *Fiqh* learning from a predominantly lecturer-centered and normative instructional model into a more dialogic, collaborative, and contextual learning process. This transformation is particularly important because contemporary higher education institutions are increasingly expected to prepare students not only with disciplinary knowledge but also with adaptive competencies such as collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity, which are widely recognized as essential capacities for navigating complex global realities (Binkley et al., 2012; Trilling & Fadel, 2009; OECD, 2018). In this regard, the implementation of PBL and PjBL in *Fiqh* Education reflects an important pedagogical shift in Islamic Higher Education toward competency-oriented, student-centered learning environments.

The strongest competency identified in this study was collaboration. Students consistently demonstrated competent to highly competent achievement levels in teamwork, collective responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving activities. This finding indicates that PBL and PjBL effectively fostered social interaction, negotiation, and collective knowledge construction during learning activities. Such findings reinforce the argument of Dochy et al., (2003) that problem-based learning environments encourage deeper collaborative engagement because students are positioned as active participants responsible for constructing solutions to authentic problems. Similarly, Bell (2010) argues that project-based learning strengthens social learning by creating sustained opportunities for cooperation and peer interaction. In this study, collaboration developed not merely because students worked in groups, but because the learning process required them to negotiate meaning, distribute responsibilities, and collectively formulate solutions to contextual *Fiqh* cases related to contemporary *muamalah* practices.

This finding is particularly meaningful within the context of *Fiqh* learning because Islamic legal discourse historically evolved through traditions of dialogue, interpretation, and intellectual negotiation. Students' increasing ability to respect different perspectives and engage in cooperative problem-solving demonstrates that collaborative pedagogies can revitalize the dialogical nature of Islamic scholarship itself

(Lailatussaadah et al., 2025; Firmandayu & Elfaki, 2023). Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of doctrinal knowledge, PBL and PjBL encouraged them to become active participants in the learning process. This finding extends the argument of Drake and Reid (2018), who emphasize that integrated and collaborative curricula are more effective in developing twenty-first-century competencies than fragmented instructional models. Likewise, Nisa et al., (2025) found that collaborative problem-based learning strengthens students' participation and teamwork capacities through shared inquiry and reflective interaction. Within this study, collaboration therefore functioned not only as a social competency but also as an epistemological practice rooted in the intellectual tradition of Islamic legal reasoning.

The findings regarding communication competencies also demonstrate that PBL and PjBL positively influenced students' confidence and participation in academic interaction. Students became increasingly active in expressing opinions, responding to questions, and presenting arguments during classroom discussions and project presentations. The use of PowerPoint, Canva, and simulation videos created broader communicative spaces, enabling students to articulate ideas more interactively. These findings support Spektor-Levy et al., (2008), who argue that active and inquiry-based learning environments strengthen students' communication skills because students are required to continuously explain, defend, and negotiate ideas throughout the learning process. Similarly, Tindowen et al., (2017) emphasize that communication competence in twenty-first-century education develops more effectively when students are directly engaged in participatory and collaborative learning experiences.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that students' structured academic communication and multilingual literacy remained relatively weak. Although students demonstrated increased confidence in oral participation, many still struggled to construct systematic academic arguments and to communicate ideas in an analytically organized way. This finding indicates that communication competency in higher education cannot be reduced to mere speaking confidence or participation frequency. Academic communication also requires the ability to synthesize evidence, formulate logical reasoning, and articulate arguments coherently within scholarly contexts (Darmawan et al., 2025; Latif et al., 2024).

The weakness in multilingual communication further reflects broader structural challenges within Islamic Higher Education, where Arabic and English literacy are often insufficiently integrated into disciplinary learning practices. In fact, contemporary Islamic



scholarship increasingly requires engagement with multilingual academic sources and global intellectual discourse. Therefore, communication development within Islamic Higher Education should involve not only participatory learning but also the strengthening of academic literacy and scholarly writing practices. This finding resonates with Maujud and Syaharuddin (2025), who emphasize that educational quality assurance in Islamic institutions must include the strengthening of communication and literacy competencies to meet international educational standards.

Compared to collaboration and communication, critical thinking emerged as the weakest competency throughout the implementation process. Although students gradually demonstrated improvement during repeated PBL and PjBL activities, many initially relied heavily on normative textbook explanations rather than analytical reasoning when responding to contextual *Fiqh* problems. This finding indicates that the development of critical thinking requires more than simply exposing students to problem-solving tasks. Students also require sustained intellectual scaffolding, reflective engagement, and continuous practice in analytical interpretation (Vinco et al., 2025; Lailatussaadah et al., 2025; Kasim et al., 2025). This finding supports Lukitasari et al., (2019), who argue that problem-based learning contributes to the development of critical thinking only when supported by reflective and inquiry-oriented learning processes. Similarly, Voogt and Roblin (2012) emphasize that higher-order thinking skills require systematic curricular integration and sustained pedagogical reinforcement rather than isolated instructional interventions.

The relatively limited development of critical thinking in this study also reflects an important pedagogical tension within *Fiqh* Education itself. Traditional *Fiqh* instruction frequently positions students as recipients of established legal conclusions rather than active interpreters of social realities. Consequently, when students are confronted with contextual socio-religious problems, many experience difficulties moving beyond doctrinal responses toward analytical and reflective reasoning. However, the gradual improvement observed during repeated PBL and PjBL sessions suggests that contextualized learning activities can encourage students to connect Islamic legal principles with contemporary realities such as online transactions and modern *muamalah* practices. This finding is consistent with Suryani and Rahman (2019), who argue that contextual *Fiqh* learning enables students to understand Islamic law more critically and meaningfully within everyday social realities. Likewise, Maulana et al., (2023) found that active learning methods in *Fiqh* instruction

strengthen students' analytical engagement and classroom participation compared to conventional teaching approaches.

The findings regarding creativity further reinforce the importance of active pedagogical approaches within Islamic Higher Education. Students demonstrated strong openness toward new ideas and perspectives, particularly during project development and collaborative presentations. The creation of Hajj and Umrah simulation videos, visual learning materials, and creative presentations indicates that students are increasingly transforming conceptual understanding into contextual and innovative learning outputs. This finding supports Ravari and Salari (2015), who emphasize that creativity develops more effectively when students are encouraged to explore ideas independently and engage actively in meaningful learning experiences. Similarly, Meylani and Budiman (2024) found that project-based learning environments encourage students to develop innovative learning products through contextual and participatory instructional activities.

At the same time, the findings also indicate that productive creativity remained unevenly developed. While students demonstrated strong openness toward new perspectives, their ability to transform ideas into more complex and innovative outputs still required further strengthening. This condition suggests that social creativity and intellectual openness may develop faster than applied innovation skills. Such findings are understandable because many students remain unfamiliar with open-ended learning environments that require experimentation and independent exploration. Firdausi et al., (2024) similarly argue that project-based learning gradually develops scientific and creative competencies through repeated engagement in inquiry-based and production-oriented activities. Thus, creativity development within Islamic Higher Education should be understood as a continuous pedagogical process rather than an instant instructional outcome.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on twenty-first-century competencies by demonstrating that Fiqh Education can function not only as a medium for transmitting Islamic legal knowledge but also as a productive space for developing collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. The findings show that active pedagogical approaches are compatible with Islamic intellectual traditions and can strengthen the contextual relevance of Fiqh learning in contemporary higher education (Faiz et al., 2024; Saifullah & Nurjanah, 2024; Latif et al., 2024). This

contribution extends current discussions on competency-oriented learning by positioning Fiqh Education as a bridge between Islamic scholarship and the demands of twenty-first-century education.

Practically, the findings suggest that lecturers in Islamic Higher Education should move beyond lecture-centered instruction and adopt more participatory pedagogies that encourage collaborative inquiry, contextual reasoning, and reflective engagement. Such transformation is increasingly important for strengthening educational quality, institutional competitiveness, and responsiveness to contemporary societal challenges (Zaini et al., 2023; Suraijjah et al., 2026; Thoyib et al., 2025; Arifin et al., 2025).

A distinctive contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that *Fiqh* Education can function not merely as a medium for transmitting Islamic legal knowledge but also as a productive pedagogical space for developing twenty-first-century competencies. While previous studies have generally examined PBL and PjBL within science education, vocational learning, or general higher education contexts, this study shows that the epistemological foundations of *Fiqh* itself—including legal reasoning, contextual interpretation, ethical deliberation, and engagement with diverse scholarly perspectives—provide meaningful opportunities for fostering collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. The findings therefore extend current discussions on competency-oriented learning by illustrating how Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary pedagogical approaches can be integrated in ways that strengthen both educational relevance and disciplinary integrity.

Beyond the Indonesian context, these findings contribute to international discussions on how faith-based higher education institutions can respond to the demands of twenty-first-century learning while preserving their intellectual and spiritual traditions. The successful implementation of PBL and PjBL in Fiqh Education demonstrates that competency-oriented pedagogies can be integrated into learning environments rooted in religious values and textual scholarship. This finding challenges the assumption that religious education is inherently resistant to pedagogical innovation and supports previous arguments that Islamic educational institutions remain dynamic through ongoing processes of adaptation and knowledge reconstruction (Mahrus et al., 2025; Vinco et al., 2025; Fauzi, 2024). More broadly, the study suggests that pedagogical innovation can strengthen the relevance and

competitiveness of Islamic Higher Education in addressing contemporary educational challenges (Munifah et al., 2025; Syaharuddin et al., 2025).

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the relatively small number of participants, involving only 38 students, limits the broader generalizability of the findings across different institutional and cultural contexts. Second, although the mixed-methods approach provided a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation process, the study's limited duration may not have fully captured the long-term development of students' twenty-first-century competencies. Furthermore, the study focused primarily on classroom-based learning activities, which may not entirely reflect how these competencies are sustained beyond formal instructional settings. These limitations should therefore be understood not as weaknesses that diminish the significance of the findings, but as important considerations for expanding future investigations concerning the implementation of competency-oriented pedagogies within Islamic Higher Education.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The findings of this study demonstrate that implementing Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and Project-Based Learning (PjBL) contributes not only to the development of twenty-first-century competencies in *Fiqh* Education within Islamic Higher Education but also to a broader transformation of *Fiqh* pedagogy itself. More importantly, these findings reveal that active pedagogical approaches are capable of transforming *Fiqh* learning from a predominantly lecturer-centered and normative instructional model into a more dialogic, collaborative, contextual, and student-centered learning process. This transformation reflects a shift from the transmission of doctrinal knowledge toward a competency-oriented educational paradigm that prepares students to engage with contemporary socio-religious realities.

The significance of this study lies not merely in demonstrating the effectiveness of PBL and PjBL as instructional models, but in showing that competency-oriented pedagogies can be meaningfully integrated into Islamic Higher Education without diminishing the intellectual and spiritual foundations of *Fiqh* learning. The findings contribute to the growing discourse on twenty-first-century education by positioning *Fiqh* Education as a productive space for developing collaboration, communication, creativity, and contextual reasoning. More importantly, they demonstrate that the transformation of *Fiqh* Education is



both feasible and necessary for responding to the demands of contemporary learning and socio-religious realities.

Practically, the study implies that lecturers in Islamic Higher Education institutions should move beyond rigid lecture-centered instruction and adopt more interactive pedagogical strategies that encourage inquiry, collaboration, and reflective engagement. At a broader level, the findings are also relevant to global discussions on the transformation of religious education in the twenty-first century. As higher education institutions face growing demands for global competitiveness, innovation, and adaptive learning environments, integrating competency-oriented pedagogies into Islamic education is increasingly important for strengthening both academic relevance and institutional sustainability.

Nevertheless, this study was limited by the relatively small number of participants and the short duration of the implementation process, which may not fully capture the long-term development of students' twenty-first-century competencies. Future research could therefore expand the investigation across different Islamic Higher Education institutions, involve larger participant groups, and examine the long-term sustainability of competency development through active pedagogical approaches in various disciplinary contexts.

Ultimately, this study highlights that the future relevance of *Fiqh* Education in Islamic Higher Education depends not only on preserving doctrinal knowledge but also on the ability to cultivate contextual, collaborative, and reflective learning practices capable of preparing students to engage critically and creatively with the complexities of contemporary society.

### **Declaration of Competing Interest**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests, personal relationships, institutional affiliations, or conflicts of interest that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this study.

### **Declaration of Generative AI**

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors employed artificial intelligence-assisted language tools to support sentence refinement, grammatical accuracy, and overall linguistic clarity. All AI-generated recommendations were carefully reviewed, modified, and contextualized by the authors to ensure alignment with the academic objectives of the study. The authors retained full responsibility for the conceptualization of the research,

data analysis, interpretation of findings, development of arguments, and the scholarly substance of the article. Furthermore, the authors are solely accountable for the originality, reliability, and scientific integrity of the manuscript.

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